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Life and travels of James Fisher, sergeant



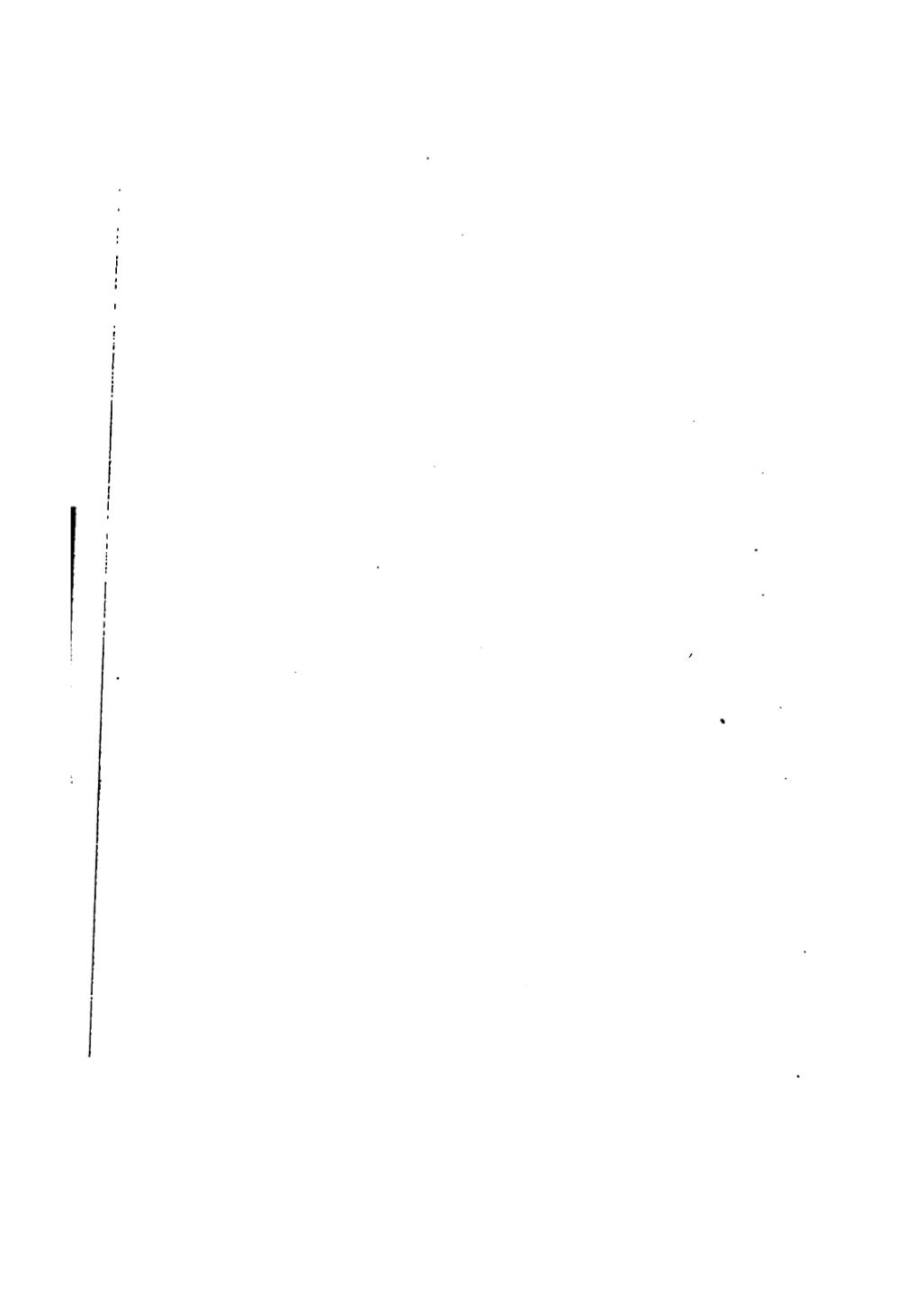
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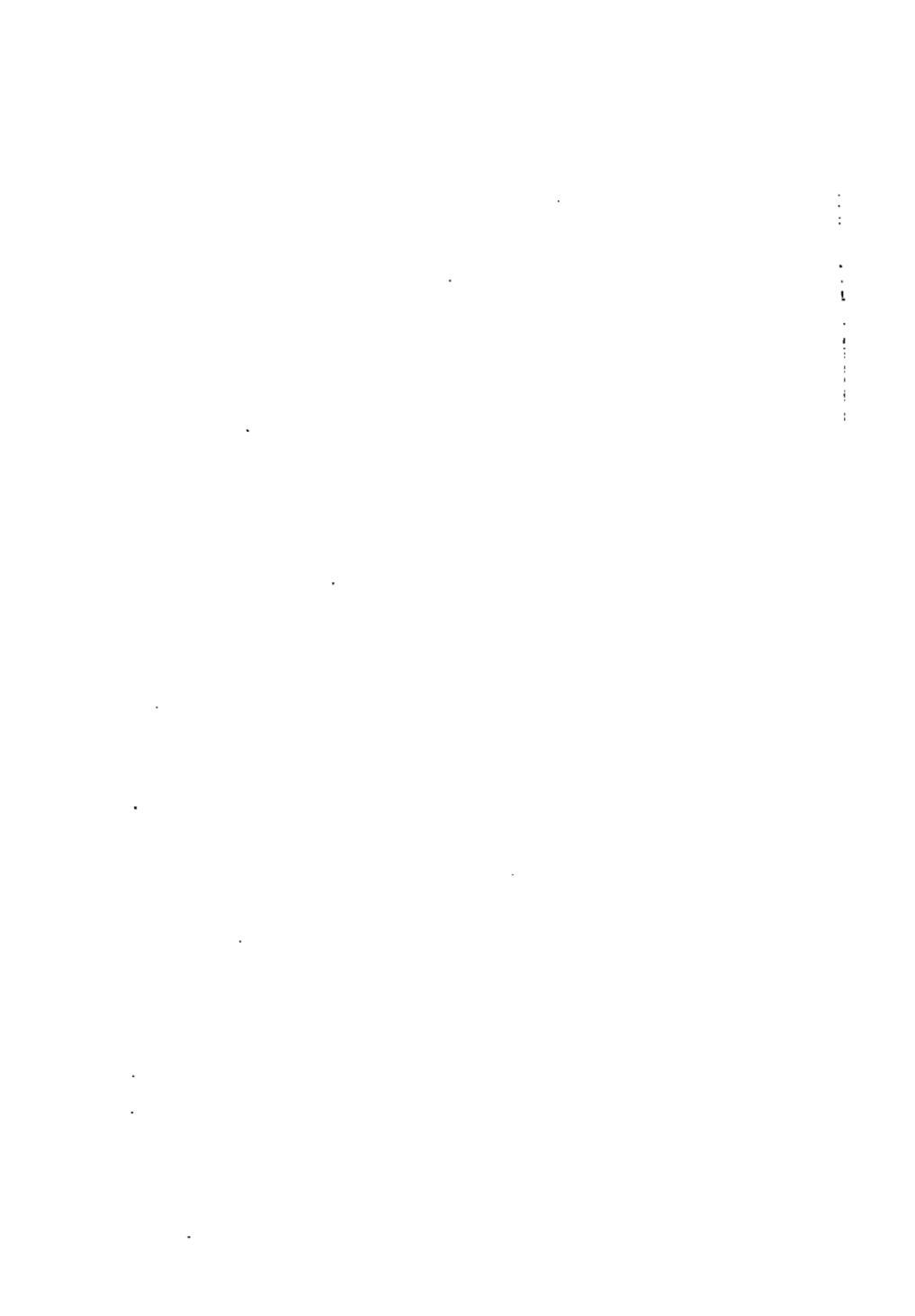
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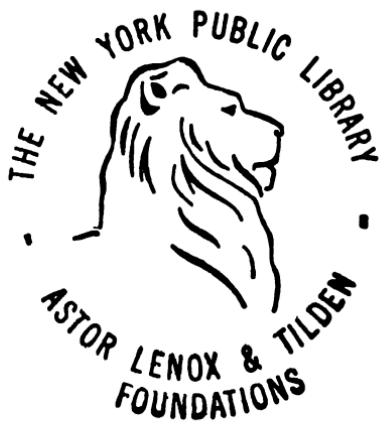
James B. Polk

LIFE AND TRAVELS
OF
JAMES FISHER,

*Sergeant-Major Scots Greys, Military Train, Army Service Corps,
British Army.*

An Autobiography.

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LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF

JAMES FISHER,

*Sergeant-Major Scots Greys, Military Train, Army Service Corps,
British Army.*

Member of the Army and Navy Veterans.

 WAS born in a small village called Carnbee, in the County of Fife, north of the Frith of Forth, in Scotland, on 26th May, 1836. When I was one year old, my father, with his family, removed to a farm called Gleghornie, near North Berwick Law, in East Lothian, afterwards to Beanston, near Haddington, thereafter to Luggate, further east in the same county. When at the latter place, I remember, I was about five years old and was sent to a parish school called Luggate Burn. When I attained my sixth year, my mother died, which event cast a gloom over the family consisting of three brothers and one sister, of whom I was third oldest. After remaining at

Luggate till I was about nine years of age my father removed to Beilgrange, a distance of a few miles. I remained at the same school, and the schooling then cost the parent something, as the wages then were far below what they are now. It was not as it is now ; one could almost do as he pleased so long as Mr. Dominie received his fees, which seemed to be all that he cared much for.

At the age of ten I was sent to work on the estate of Whittinghame, in East Lothian, belonging to Mr. Balfour. My duties consisted in assisting to clean walks and carriage roads and in planting young trees. While at work one day, Mr. Balfour selected me from a number of boys and gave me employment in his mansion house, a very beautiful structure. I remained there a short time and then I entered the services of Lord Abercromby, at Airthry Castle, in Stirlingshire, as page to her ladyship. I travelled with this family for two years through a considerable part of Scotland, visiting some historic places, such as Edinburgh Castle, Stirling Castle, Bannockburn, Blairgowrie, Perth, and several other ancient places and cities of interest. When sixteen years of age I left his lordship's service, having made up my mind to see some of the world.

Not having much money to start with, and having read of people working their passages to foreign lands on board vessels I thought that Liverpool might be the best place to start from. I therefore left Airthry Castle for Glasgow by train and, having arrived there, took steamer for Liverpool. During the voyage I happened quite accidentally to make the acquaintance of a young man a little my senior, and in course of conversation he impressed on me the wisdom of being very cautious whom I made any friendship with as there was sometimes rather a bad lot on board vessels and it might be too on this one, and if I had any money, as well as outer articles of value, to lock them up in my box. I took this piece of what seemed to me good advice and everything went on very nicely. I did not turn sea-sick but enjoyed my trip.

We arrived at Liverpool all right and my young friend kindly volunteered to assist me with my box, he taking hold of one handle and I the other. Not being very heavy we carried it thus to the nearest hotel, just outside of the Saint Clarence dock, and lodged it in the waiting-room. Seeing the landlady I asked her to be allowed to leave my box till I came back, as I was going across the river for a little, and she said that it would be all right. I then left the hotel

with the young man who accompanied me to the ferry wharf, but then in the confusion I lost sight of him, and not paying much attention I took a ticket for Birkenhead, and then went to the dock where the vessel named "The Indian Ocean" was preparing for a voyage to Melbourne with emigrants. After some conversation with the captain, he agreed to take me on board as assistant steward. I now recrossed to the Liverpool side of the Mersey and made straight to the hotel for my box that I might convey it to the vessel, but to my utter astonishment I could not find my box, and the landlady told me that the young man who had assisted me with it had come and taken it away on a cab, saying to her that it was his. I was perfectly thunderstruck; five hundred miles from home, in a strange land and amongst strange people, and all that I now had in the world was what I stood upright in. I lost all as well as the little money I had, as I took his advice and had it locked up in my box. I gave information to the police and after a few days searching in and around Liverpool, the vessel had sailed for her destination, leaving me behind. This was my first misfortune but it did me a great deal of good for in after life it was always uppermost in my mind.

After a fruitless search with the police I again returned to the hotel, not knowing what to do, but after explaining my position to the landlord—who happened to be a Scotchman—he, feeling for me, took me into his employment to assist around the hotel. As I was pretty handy I soon became respected and remained in this position for some time. In this way I made enough to purchase good clothing and a watch, with some money over and above in my pocket. I got tired of hotel life and resolved to return to my native land again, so I sailed from Liverpool to Glasgow, taking care to make no young man's acquaintance this time.

Having arrived all right at Glasgow, I proceeded by rail to Edinburgh and paid a short visit to my father, brothers and sister in the adjoining county of East Lothian. I thereafter returned to Edinburgh to look out for some position.

The Crimean War was going on at this time, and in my reading newspapers, which I always took an interest in, I began to think I should like to see that country and its people. I took an interest in reading the details about Alma, Inkerman, Balaclava, etc., and forthwith proceeded to Piershill Barracks, or commonly called Jock's Lodge, within two miles of

Edinburgh, and there on 26th February, 1855, at the age of eighteen, I enlisted for the 2nd Royal North British Dragoons (Scotch Greys), which was at the time in the Crimea—the 1st King's Dragoon Guards were enlisting for the Greys. I got on with my riding and sword drills rapidly, being anxious to join my regiment.

The trumpets would sound in the morning at 5.30, then stables at six, when all hands would parade and be marched to stables to clean them out and feed, water and groom the horses ; then after one hour's work, breakfast ; then riding school for one hour, sword drill and foot drill ; after this, stables again. Dinner hour, then sword and troop drill. Supper time, then stables again. After that we would go out till 9 p.m.

When at Piershill, I had a good opportunity of visiting the great stronghold, Edinburgh Castle, as well as Holyrood Palace, and other ancient and interesting places, and after nearly four months of hard riding and drilling I, along with ninety others, was considered fit to join our regiment and got dismissed for that purpose. On 17th June, 1855, we got orders to hold ourselves in readiness, and on the 19th of that month the detachment, consisting of ninety men and

two hundred horses, left Edinburgh by rail (and a very wet day it was), under the command of Lieutenant Dunbar.

We arrived at Preston, in England, where we were billeted one night, and next day we marched by road to Banbury, and after a night's rest there we marched to Liverpool. I was not so disheartened this time as on my first visit to that city.

After a deal of hard work we succeeded in getting all the horses on board the steam transport "Assistance." On the steamer sailing down the Mersey, both sides of the quay were lined with people cheering us and wishing us God speed and a safe return, but I am sorry to say that a good number that left that day did not return, their bodies being laid to rest far from home in the cold Crimea. We were, of course, in high spirits on leaving, as it was our first start and we had little knowledge, indeed, of the horrors of war.

We soon crossed the Irish Channel, calling at Kingstown, where there was a number of troops waiting our arrival to be taken on board to join and strengthen their several regiments—consisting of infantry, cavalry and artillery, in a shipment of 1,100 men, 500 horses with ammunition and provisions for the troops in the east. After leaving Kingstown

we proceeded in good style, but some of the men got rather sea-sick, as well as the horses, and we had quite a time of it in slinging the horses and attending to them.

After a few days at sea we sighted the coast of Spain, and the following day we arrived at a place with land on both sides of it, viz.: the Straits of Gibralter, into which place we called to receive a fresh supply of coal and water. It is a very strongly fortified place, reaching away up into the air to a great height. Cannon were placed on the very top, and the garrisons contained about 2,000 men and 999 cannon. This is what is known as the key to the Mediterranean.

After a few more days' steaming, and having left the African coast behind, we sighted land once more. This was the Island of Malta. We received more coal, water and provisions, and proceeded on our course, and in a few days we arrived in sight of the Eastern Archipelagos, a great number of islands of great beauty. We passed through these and then entered the Straits of the Dardanelles ; the land on both sides lying very low and the Straits very narrow, with forts on both sides. Then we entered the Bosphorus, and the great city of Constantinople, with its stately temples of white marble and pinnacles of

gold and strong citadels, came in view. It is built on the side of a high rising ground, and the scenery is most magnificent to behold from the deck of a vessel.

After passing through the Golden Horn we entered the Black Sea, but the scenery then changed into mountains of prodigious height. The weather was very rough after leaving Turkey. When nearing the Crimea, we could hear the peals of the cannon firing on Sebastopol, and then we began to realize that we were drawing near our destination..

Next morning we came in sight of the Crimea. On nearing it there are many mountains rising to a great height, and it seemed as if the steamer was going to run right on the rocks, as no inlet appeared till within half a mile of them. We then observed a very narrow passage and through this the steamer went. The rocks on each side being hundreds of feet high and the passage being very little more in breadth than to allow the vessel to proceed. After getting through this gateway we got into the harbour of Balaclava, and got safely moored. So after a voyage of twenty-six days we landed in the Crimea and joined our respective regiments. We were made very welcome, indeed, by our brothers in arms, and after being told off to our different troops, we picqueted our horses on

a long line extending one hundred yards or so, each line holding about seventy horses, with no covering. We were then shown to our tents, each tent containing ten men.

My regiment was quartered at Kadakoy, about three miles from Balaclava, where all the heavy cavalry were quartered. Some hard duty had to be performed before Sebastopol, and there was scarcely a day passed but we had more or less funerals; the dead bodies being simply rolled up in a blanket and committed to the grave.

I was sent on outlying picquet on Saturday night, and on returning to my regiment in the morning—I had just had some hot coffee and hard biscuit—when the order was given for church parade, which recalled to my mind that it was Sunday. The square being formed, and service commenced, the chaplain was proceeding with his discourse when the order was given to turn out. All the regiments were on parade in less than five minutes and the brigade off across the open plain towards the heights. In the advance of the brigade a shell went whistling past my regiment. This was my first baptism of fire, and like the disappearance of my box in Liverpool, it has never left my mind.

Valiant warriors of the north,
Who from Scotland have gone forth
To fight the battles of the free
And tell the natives o'er the sea
That we come from bonnie Scotland.

I remained with my regiment on the plains of Bala-clava, and we had plenty of heavy duty to perform with outlying and inlying picquets, that is to say, about twenty or thirty men with one captain and a lieutenant sent out at dark. The sentries would be posted two and two together at a short distance apart, close to the Russian lines in order to watch their movements, and if they should make any advance we were to alarm the inlying picquet. They would then come to the outlying picquet and thereupon the whole brigade would be armed and ready for the attack. The picquets were shifted every twenty-four hours and the sentries every hour.

When off duty we would be hunting about for wood of any kind with which to prepare our food, and this was quite a job. Whenever and wherever we discovered a small bush we would make for it and, with pick and shovel, dig the root out of the ground. This was the only fuel we had to prepare our rations with, which consisted of salt beef, hard biscuit and

coffee in the bean. We had to grind the beans between a couple of flat stones ; and we had to carry rations from Balaclava to the front of Sebastopol for the regiments who were doing duty in the trenches. These are ditches dug out of the ground, the earth thrown towards the enemy's position, about five feet high and six feet wide. The infantry had to be in these trenches night and day, relief coming every night after dark, so that the Russians could not know the number there.

The trenches ran for miles all around the enemy's position, and in most of them cannon were placed. They were always being fired on Sebastopol, and if any of each side exposed themselves there would be a shot sent for them, and a great many got picked off on both sides.

After dark the enemy would make a sortie out of Sebastopol on the trenches, when a great slaughter would take place, and in the morning there would be hundreds killed and wounded lying in all directions. Then there would be a flag of truce hoisted—that is a white flag—to stay further action till all the dead were buried, then action would commence again.

On August 15, 1855, the enemy made a great flank movement with the intention of capturing Balaclava,

and nearly executed their plan, but the French and Sardinian troops nobly defended the position and resisted the advance. It was one of the severest battles during the campaign. Thousands were slain on both sides, but at last the enemy had to retire to their former position. This was the battle of the Tchernaya Heights.

It was a grand sight to see the whole of the enemy in motion ; French and British cavalry, with artillery, on the opposite plain, with the Russians in our front. The Russians sent some of their shells right into the ranks, a great many of them exploding only a short distance from the columns ; and the only thing of importance from that time till the fall of Sebastopol was a reconnoitering party dispatched to capture some forage for the horses stationed between the British lines and the enemy ; the Greys were detailed for this duty.

We started early one morning with some waggons from the land transport corps, and having the waggons loaded and being about to go back to our lines, the Russians in the meantime had crept down unseen and, opening fire on us we had to beat a speedy retreat, having several men killed and wounded. From that time we were kept actively engaged till September

6th, when all the cavalry were drawn close up to Sebastopol, and formed a chain of sentries all round the British position. My post, with some others, was in a ravine between the Redan and the Malicoff, being the two strongest positions which the Russians held.

All being now ready, the final siege commenced, and for two nights and two days we were kept on the ground. The firing and roar of the cannon were most terrible, the whole of the earth trembling as if from an earthquake, the skies were lighted up with the bursting of the shells in the air, and the balls from the cannon meeting each other. All this time the cavalry were between two fires so as to endeavour to prevent a sortie from the Russians. Every now and then there would be an explosion in the Russian lines, or a magazine or mine blown up to prevent the army from advancing.

On the 8th September, one of the Russian's best forts was blown up, viz., Fort Constine. It was built of solid granite, and the whole fort, guns and men, went into the air, about two hundred feet, and exploded like a shell.

At this stage, the French made a grand attack on the Malicoff and captured it, the whole of the enemy

making a rush for the Redan and so greatly strengthened it. Shortly after this the British made a grand charge from their trenches on the Redan, but received a bold check from the Russians who had been greatly reinforced by their troops from the Malicoff. The British found that their scaling ladders were too short, but all the same a great number succeeded in getting into the Redan, when they cut down a number of Russians at their guns, but were forced to retire after sustaining a very heavy loss in killed and wounded.

On the 9th of September the stronghold of Sebastopol fell into the hands of the allied army, but this did not finish the campaign, as the Russians still held the north side of Sebastopol till peace was proclaimed. I visited some parts of this stronghold after the fall and found it simply a mass of ruins. Before the siege it was one of the grandest cities.

After peace had been proclaimed the whole of the allied army was reviewed by the general commanding in the Crimea, in presence of several of the leading generals of the Russians, and it was rather a curious circumstance to see some Russian officers in company or along with British, French, Sardinian and Turkish officers. This review was one of the grandest sights

that ever I witnessed. It consisted of about two hundred thousand troops marching past in one day, and taking seven hours to do so. After this my regiment left the Crimea and was stationed in Turkey.

The weather in the Crimea was very cold in winter, with plenty snow, and exceedingly hot in summer. There was plenty vine-growing, but the grapes had not time to grow, as the allied armies had to go for all the roots for fuel. While in Turkey I had an opportunity of visiting Constantinople, and I was somewhat disappointed with it, as the streets are very narrow and the houses high and nearly all made with wood. It certainly had not the appearance it presented to me when on the deck of the *Assistance*. It is somewhat dirty and at every corner of the streets there were thousands of dogs of the Collie breed. The natives were very kind to us calling us "bonny Johnnies," which seemed to be all the English they could utter. While the cavalry were stationed in Turkey we were reviewed by the Sultan and his Staff, and commanded by General Scarlott. It was a grand spectacle.

At last the troops were ordered home to England, and on the 1st September, 1856, the regiment embarked for our homeward voyage. Nothing of any

importance transpired on the voyage, and we arrived in Portsmouth after a running of nineteen days. After disembarking we proceeded to Farnham, near Aldershot, and after inspection by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen and the Prince Consort we were all presented with medals for our services, and complimented by Her Majesty. The regiment paraded without horses, so that Her Majesty walked along the front rank and down the rear rank of the regiment, and said a word to every man.

After the review, the regiment got orders for Newbridge, situated about twenty-five miles from Dublin, in Ireland, in order to recruit itself along with the horses, as most of them had died from exposure. The first day's march was from Aldershot to Reading, in Berkshire, which was the birthplace of our gallant commander, Colonel Griffiths, and consequently we were entertained to a grand banquet in the Town Hall, and also in every large town through our line of march till at last we reached Liverpool, the sight of which recalled again to my mind my first experience in that city. After embarking aboard of one of the Channel steamers we crossed to Dublin, and from there we marched to Newbridge. The troop to which

I belonged was sent to the Curragh Camp, and while there I left the Scots Greys.

At this time, or in November, 1856, a new corps was being formed, and volunteers were required and inducements given, and into it I volunteered. This new branch of the army was to be called the Military Train, and its duty was a mounted transport. My battalion was formed on the Curragh Camp, and named the Second Battalion Military Train, consisting of four troops, each having 115 men with horses. After joining, on or about 1st April, 1857, the battalion received orders to hold ourselves in readiness to proceed to China. The China war at this time had just commenced.

On April 4th we left the Curragh Camp for Dublin by rail, and embarking there we proceeded to Bristol, England, being the head-quarters of the corps. Being complete with men and arms we left by rail for Woolwich, and after remaining there for a few days we received orders to prepare for embarkation.

Accordingly on 15th April, 1857, the battalion left Woolwich Barracks, the band of the Royal Artillery accompanying us to the place of embarkation playing to the tune of "the girl I left behind me," and others. We were also accompanied by the officer command-

ing the garrison, viz., General Williams, the **hero of** Kars. All the officers and men were in high spirits as is always the case when soldiers leave for any foreign war, and the greatest enthusiasm was displayed.

The strength of the battalion was 450 men and 20 officers under the command of Major Robertson, an officer who had seen much foreign service, being in the Sutlej campaign, including the battles of Modkee Sobraon, and had served in the Crimea, including the siege of Sebastopol.

We embarked at Woolwich Arsenal, on the 15th, at 3 p.m., and after having everything put right we let go from the wharf, and the good ship *Belverry Castle* started on her voyage down the River Thames, which is one of the finest in the world for its great traffic, and we had some splendid views from both sides of the river. After passing Gravesend we very soon got into the English Channel, and having fine weather and fair wind we soon were under the cliffs of Dover, which is famed for its renowned castle, and the coast of France was also soon in sight. During our passage in the Channel we passed a great number of vessels of all kinds, and at last we approached

“lands end.” This is the Southmost point of England.

After losing sight of the land we got right out into the open sea, and the weather then commenced to be rather rough—and I should now say a few words as to

A SOLDIER'S LIFE ON BOARD WITHOUT HORSES.

The trumpet would sound the reveille at 6.30 a.m., when all hands would get up out of our hammocks. These were made of strong canvas with small cords at each end, and were hung on hooks close together as eggs in a packing case. We had all to parade on deck, each man with his hammock all properly adjusted in order to be aired ; then roll called, afterwards breakfast, consisting of sea biscuit and chocolate, but some of us did not care much for the latter. Then we would have doctor's inspection ; every man not on duty having to be present with his feet and arms bare.

During this inspection on deck, men would be told off to clean up between decks. Then we would have kitt inspection to ascertain whether every man had his wearing apparel and other equipment in clean and good order. Then dinner about 12 o'clock, noon, and supper about 5 o'clock, and church parade every

Sunday ; services being always conducted by the chaplain of the vessel. Everything went on well except that a few got seasick. In the evening we would collect ourselves in groups on deck and have all kinds of sports, along with singing and other amusements.

Day after day and week after week passed away in this fashion, only we would observe a sail now and again, but there was nothing else except the rolling waves as the good ship dashed through on her onward course till May 29th, when the lookout at the mast head called out land ahead when all hands rushed on deck to get a sight of it. It seemed like a cloud in the distance, it being evening the darkness closed the land from our view. Next morning we came pretty close to the land, close enough to enable us to perceive the Union Jack flowing from the top of the flag pole. This land was the Island of Ascension a coaling station for the British Navy, it lay very flat and had a sandy or soft appearance. We soon lost sight of it in our course, and everything went on as usual again till 27th June when land was again sighted, and on coming up to it I observed that it had a rather rocky appearance. This was the Island of Saint

Helena, where the great Napoleon I. was sent to after the battle of Waterloo.

After leaving this land behind, the weather commenced to be rather rough and cold, and the vessel at times going at the rate of eight and nine knots (miles) per hour with bare poles—that is with no canvas on, and the hurricane lasted for four or five days. The sea was rising mountains high and the waves sometimes passing right over the vessel, and at times the vessel itself would be so engulfed that we would not see ten yards from the deck, and in another minute or so she would be two hundred feet high, raised by a mountainous wave. This was when rounding the Cape of Good Hope, and the weather then moderated itself a little, so we proceeded on our course somewhat smoother until August 5th, when land was again sighted.

On coming near, it presented a sight of great beauty. There were two islands covered with bushes and trees, and here and there houses could be seen at different spots through the trees. Their names were Java and Sumatra, and were situated on the skirts of the Indian Ocean ; and the former is famed for a small bird named a Java sparrow. The natives, who were very dark complexioned, became exceedingly kind to us,

bringing us all sorts of fruits in their bumboats, which we purchased from them.

It is also a great place for small monkeys, and the natives made us a present of some of them. We let them loose on deck, and in a moment they ran up the rigging and out on the yard arms, to the great amusement of all on board. The natives have also a very nice vegetable, called yams, resembling our potato.

The passage between the islands is called the Straits of Sunda. On the Island of Java there was a British Consul, who had received instructions to have all troops on their passage to China countermanded and sent on to India, as the China war had ended, and because the rebellion had broken out in India, at a position a little beyond Calcutta.

We had to make for Singapore, as it was one of our Indian stations for ships of war to harbour in. Singapore is a rather hot and sandy island, being right under the line ; and while here some of the men, including myself, got out of ship to have a sea-bath. We were not very long in the water when we discovered that we were in the company of sharks, which made us all very soon gain the decks of the vessel again. We remained here for two days, and after being supplied with fresh articles of food, we made for Cal-

cutta. While on the passage from England, I with three other men was promoted to the rank of lance corporal.

We arrived at the mouth of the River Hooghla on 28th August, and on going up this river some terrible sights met the eye. There were dead bodies of human beings placed on small rafts, and there were large birds sitting picking the flesh off the bones. Instead of burying the bodies, they commit them to the water.

The land on both sides of the river is very low. As far as the eye can reach, the rice fields present a very fine appearance, ridges being made with clay to conduct the water, which is pumped from the river; and in this way it goes on for miles.

At last we came in sight of Fort William, where we were to disembark. The whole of the banks on both sides of the river were covered with people from Calcutta to welcome us, and after a salute from the fort the *Belverry Castle* dropped anchor. Thus the battalion disembarked after four months and sixteen days without setting foot on land, and we were stationed at Fort William, to await the arrival of horses.

While there we had to do duty, and guard over the King of Lucknow, who was then a prisoner in the fort, and who was a tall, smart-looking man. In

about a week after this our horses arrived from Madras, consisting of a lot of splendid Arabians, and after being fully equipped the battalion was marched to Dumdum, about nine miles from Calcutta, to the cavalry barracks.

While quartered here, and just as the troops were about to sit down to breakfast one morning, the general assembly was sounded, when every man had to turn out on parade. The battalion was then told by the commanding officer that it had been found that all the bread had been poisoned, and not to touch it. The bakers were natives, and the bread was all taken out of the rooms and destroyed. The head baker and four others were arrested, and refusing or being unable to give any satisfactory account about the poison, they all five were hanged on one gallows in the presence of all the troops.

After remaining at Dumdum fourteen days, the battalion received orders to march up country, to the relief of Delhi, a distance of fifteen hundred miles. On 20th September the battalion left Calcutta by rail, travelling about one hundred miles ; but we could not proceed further, as the Sepoys had destroyed the track as well as the bridges. At this place a brigade

was in formation, consisting of about three thousand troops of all arms of the service.

After things had been put in order, the troops commenced their march, striking camp at about 3 a.m. We would march till about 9 or 10 o'clock in the forenoon, going fourteen or fifteen miles per day, and some days we would make a forced march of twenty-five miles or thereabouts, the bands playing and the men singing during the march. The infantry were sometimes outmarching the horses, and in this way days and weeks passed away, including Sundays, through a rather rough country.

The first place of importance we arrived at was the City of Benares, and at this station the Sepoys were disarmed just in time, as they had made everything ready for a massacre of all the Europeans in the city. They, however, were all marched out on parade, and a battery of artillery was drawn up in front of them. The guns were loaded in their presence, and they were ordered to lay down their arms. If they refused to do so they were told they would be blown to pieces ; but they took good advice and laid down their arms on the ground. They then got the command of right about face, quick march, and were all landed on board a steamer, and sent down country.

Benares is a city on the river Ganges, and abounds with temples of great beauty ; it is called by the natives the Sacred City of the Gods. The country after this is somewhat flat and swampy, overgrown with bush, and what is called jungle. The tiger abounds all through this section of Bengal.

One day I was on the rear guard, or among the last of the column, and feeling thirsty I saw a house a short distance away from the road on which we were marching, so I rode over to it and got a drink of water. My column by this time had passed on a little, and in taking a nearer cut to catch them I found myself in a sugar cane field. When partly through this, to my great astonishment, a wild boar got up and made a dash at my horse. I had to put spurs to him, but the cane prevented me from making much headway, so I was compelled to take aim and fire, but unfortunately missed. This made the brute more savage, and I was just able to keep a few yards ahead till I got out of the cane field, and putting spurs to my horse, I now left my unwelcome friend behind, glad to part company with him, and soon reached my party.

The next city of importance was Allahabad, situated also on the banks of the Ganges, which has a splendid

fort capable of holding three thousand troops. After passing this city the country becomes rather hilly. In India the troops when marching have a very long train of baggage, provisions and ammunition, and our column extended about three miles long, so we had plenty to do in guarding it through this country.

There are hill-robbers here, and we met in with some of them who attempted to plunder part of the convoy. We had several skirmishes with them and they generally got the worst of it. We had one man and two of the native drivers killed one day, but the robbers lost six or seven men.

Our equipment and provisions were conveyed by elephants, camels and bullocks, and the most fatiguing part of the march was the crossing of rivers as the bridges had been destroyed by the rebels. We had often to swim our horses across the water and had to march on with wet skins, allowing our clothing to dry on our backs, but it did not take long to do so as the heat was at 190 degrees.

At last we arrived at Cawnpore where the great massacre of women and children took place by Nana Sahib. General Wheeler gallantly held on until forced to lay down his arms for want of provisions, and because the barrack in which he and his brave

men were stationed had been battered down by the Sepoys. The General agreed to lay down arms provided the women and children were sent away first, but Nana Sahib refused to agree to this, but promised that the women and children should follow. As soon as the troops were in boats on the Ganges the Sepoys opened fire and killed the whole of them with the exception of three men who swam across the river and escaped through the bush. Then the Sepoys commenced their attack, on the women and children, of a most cruel and revolting character too horrible to relate, and then threw the mangled bodies into a deep well, at which now stands a monument to mark the spot.

On arriving at Cawnpore, a despatch was received from General Wilson stating that he had captured Delhi, and so we remained at Cawnpore for a few days. Then Sir Colin Campbell arrived with more troops and some also from Delhi. Orders were given to march to the relief of Lucknow where General Havelock was hemmed in with about two thousand troops and two hundred women and children at the mercy of the Cawnpore party. Sir Colin, with the command of the troops, numbering in all about six thousand, crossed the River Ganges on a bridge of

boats. After marching about ten miles we came upon the enemy, and the skirmishing commenced in right earnest. The rebels had the bush, and we had the open ; we had rather a hard time of it to get along as the rebels disputed our march. The artillery did some splendid work shelling the bush, as the troops marched on towards Lucknow, capturing on our way a few of the rebels who, if they would not give a clear account of themselves, would be blown down.

On 13th November, 1857, the whole column was drawn up in close order near Lucknow, but as the rebels were too strongly posted in our front Sir Colin had to make a flank movement to his right leaving a small detachment of artillery to keep up a heavy cannoning during the night, thus deceiving the rebels and giving the General a fair chance to execute his movement. By day break next morning we found ourselves on the left of Lucknow under cover of the woods and the rebels had apparently lost sight of us. About 9 o'clock we got the order to advance, and then commenced one of the most determined attacks on record, the infantry advancing, 90th Regiment in front, attacked the Dalkoocha Palace, which was very strongly fortified, and was the sum-

mer residence of the King of Lucknow, and in the meantime the cavalry and artillery were pushed forward across the plains in rear of Dalkoocha in order to intercept the retreat of the rebels into Lucknow. We had not to wait long, as the rebels commenced to retreat from their position as the encounter was becoming too hot for them. The cavalry made a splendid charge on them and a great many were killed and wounded. This was the first hand to hand encounter I had in India. The battalion had one captain and two lieutenants wounded, and five men killed, and several wounded. This was the first day's work towards the relief. At daylight again we were all in our saddles without having rightly dressed ourselves as we had to sleep, if any, among the slain that night with the reins of the bridle rolled round our wrist. The order to advance was given, and forward went the infantry to the attack, capturing the Martiniere College, which was strongly defended by the enemy, who made a most determined resistance ; but it was carried at the point of the bayonet. Then the artillery came into action, shelling the retiring rebels, and setting on fire a number of the enemy's strongholds, the enemy all the time resisting every inch of our advance. At the same time the

cavalry of the enemy made a great show on the plains in rear of Lucknow. Now this was the second day's work.

On the morning of the third day we again advanced further, and getting pretty close to Lucknow, we took up a position not far from the iron bridge, which crosses the river leading into Lucknow; here the cavalry made a charge at this bridge capturing and holding it, being reinforced and assisted by the sailors of Her Majesty's Ship *Shannon*, although the rebels tried several times to blow it up; and it was from this position that a direct fire was kept up. This ended the third day's work.

On the morning of the fourth day, the whole of the British got into position and opened a most tremendous fire on the city, which must have struck terror into the hearts of the rebels; and all day this fire was kept up. The infantry were getting right into the city. This will be long remembered by the noble men who fought that day for the relief of the women and children out of Lucknow. The iron bridge was the centre of the British attack, and the cannonade from this position was most terrible to behold, the shots even striking near the residence of the prisoners, and the rockets setting everything ablaze between us and

them. This made it somewhat hot for the rebels, and they had ultimately to give way under the range of shot and shell amongst them. The British infantry then crossed the bridge, and at the same time the gallant defenders made a sortie out to meet their deliverers, accompanied by the women and children. By four o'clock on the fifth morning the whole of the British had crossed the bridge from Lucknow; but still a heavy fire of cannonade and musketry was kept up to deceive the rebels, till all were safe beyond further danger. Then the whole of the troops retired to Alumbagh, about four and a half miles from Lucknow, on an open plain of great extent. Here the brave Havelock died, being overjoyed by his relief from Lucknow; and the whole camp mourned deeply for the loss of this good and gallant officer. He was buried with military honours at the fort of Alumbagh, and the women and children were sent on to Cawnpore with most of the sick and wounded, amounting to a great number. The British had between three and four hundred killed at the Relief of Lucknow.

At this time, 29 November, 1857, I was promoted as full corporal, and the Second Battalion Military Train was one of the regiments selected to remain on the Alumbagh, in all about 4000 troops to hold the

position till further reinforcements arrived from England, all under the command of General Outram. Nearly every day we would have to turn out as the rebels would come out of Lucknow and attack us, but being on an open plain we always had the best of them.

On 16th February, 1858, we had a most severe engagement with the rebel cavalry numbering 3000 strong—and we were ordered out to check any further advance with Captain Alfred's Field Battery Royal Artillery. The battalion formed line with the artillery close in rear, so that the enemy could not perceive them. Both advanced to each other within a distance of 300 yards, when the commanding officer gave the trumpeter the order to sound the charge, and in less time than it takes me to note it we were in among the rebels.

They were thrown into great confusion by the battalion wheeling outwards from their centre and thus giving a clear opening for the artillery who were in full readiness with grape and cannister. The artillery mowed down both horses and men in heaps to the ground, and the remaining rebels then commenced to retire when we went for them in right good earnest. They had five hundred men killed and I don't know

how many wounded, and the Military Train had five killed and a few wounded.

After this engagement the rebel cavalry were somewhat more cautious in their movements. They always carried away all their wounded if they at all could, as no prisoners were taken on either side if that could be prevented. If any of the British soldiers happened to be taken prisoner they would be tortured to death by the rebels. That fate befell Regimental Sergeant Major Butler of the battalion, who, whilst out one night visiting the outlying picquets, missed his way and fell into the hands of the rebels who beheaded and otherwise mangled him—but if we happened to have any of them as prisoners, we disposed of them by a shot from the cannon.

After this engagement I was selected by my commanding officer to do dispatch duty along with four privates who paraded at the head-quarters of General Outram, commanding the camp. We were joined by a guide and received the dispatches from the hands of the General himself with special instructions to deliver them to no one but General Inglis at Cawnpore if within my power. This was at ten o'clock at night and the distance between our camp at Alumbagh and Cawnpore, was fifty-one miles. On our way the moon

broke out and shined most brilliantly, and after passing Bunny Bridge about two miles in the rear of the camp, being the last or extreme position of the British, we emerged into open country.

We were aware that the country between Lucknow and Cawnpore was greatly infested with rebels and so we had made every preparation for a scuffle with them. We had our rifles loaded and swords drawn, and putting spurs to our steeds we soon left Bunny Bridge behind. When about half way to our destination we arrived at a small village, having its gate open to us, but our guide being rather a shrewd man, and knowing well the tricks of the rebels, in place of keeping right forward, took a circuitous route to our right through a very marshy place, the horses going up to their girths at every bound. We gained the road again once more, and looking behind us we saw a gate opened and some horsemen come dashing after us. The rebels had possession of the village, as we had suspected, but pressing our horses a little we soon left these rebels behind.

We reached the Bridge of Boats, at Cawnpore, about half past two o'clock in the morning, and we found it guarded by a picquet of Sepoy's, loyal to the British, and they taking us for the rebels, were about

to resist our crossing, but I gave the order to charge and we were soon at the other end of the bridge. Not looking at what damage had been done we were soon in General Inglis's headquarters. The General got out of his bed and received us most cordially. I delivered the dispatches to him and he returned to me his warmest thanks, at the same time giving orders to have us served with provisions. He then retired, telling us to make ourselves at home, and I am bound to say we did so in right good earnest, as we had not had such comforts for a long time.

The journey from Alumbagh to Cawnpore was thus completed in four and one-half hours in the dead of night through a country occupied by the rebels. After two days rest and good provisions from the General, we received orders to return to Alumbagh, not in four and a half hours, but in forty-eight hours, with about eight hundred men and a large convoy of provisions and ammunition.

Probably this was the result of the dispatch with which I was entrusted to the General, as the troops at the camp were getting rather short, both of provisions and ammunition. We all arrived at the camp quite safely, not having seen any of the rebels on our return journey, although the troops had rather a hard

time of it on the bog. The front of the position extended about four miles, and had to be guarded as well as the sides and rear by cannon placed in small forts made by ourselves.

A few days after my expedition with the dispatch, I was detailed to take charge of four men for outpost duty to a fort about two miles to the right of the camp. Its name was Jahalabad, and it was guarded by the Second Bengal Fusiliers with four guns of artillery. There was stored in this fort all the provisions and ammunition received with the last convoy from Cawnpore, and the fort itself was protected by a very high wall and loop holed. There was a small lake in front hidden from the camp by some large trees. My duty was to send one man to camp to give the alarm, if the enemy made any attempt to take this position ; and they through their spies had learned that we had a large store in it, which made them anxious to have the position.

After the second day on this duty the rebels made an attack, but being observed in time they were promptly driven back by the troops in the fort, assisted with three guns of artillery from the camp, the four men and myself also taking part in the skirmish.

On this occasion I was ordered to ride out in front of our position, as one rebel was observed encouraging his men to advance, although they were falling back by the fire from our guns, and on getting up to him I made a cut at him and brought him down. At the same time I lost my balance and fell along side of him, I observed that he had a medal on his breast, and taking him for dead I took off his medal, remounted my horse and rode back to our men. This was done in the presence of all the troops.

On the edge of this medal was engraved, "Presented to Supersad Sing for services rendered to the British in the Sutledge campaign." This man however was not killed, as I expected, but only wounded, and he was conveyed to the camp. We were fortunate in this, because he gave to General Outram some good advice as to the position of the rebels at Lucknow, and other valuable particulars, and he also assisted Sir Colin Campbell at the fall with information.

Not long after this affair the rebels, about the beginning of March, made another attempt on Jahalabad in great force, comprising cavalry, artillery and infantry, being the strongest they had yet made. They had got a good start before being noticed, and the officer sent for me with instructions to send an

orderly to the camp at once to inform the General there ; but by the time he reached the end of the wood the enemy had passed between him and our camp, thus completely cutting off his further course. He returned and told me so, and I acquainted the officer in command, who told me that I would have to go myself.

I accordingly obeyed the orders of my superior, and left for my destination, but with no expectation of ever reaching it. When I emerged from the trees, whose tops had hidden me from the enemy's view, into the open plain, where the enemy was passing in great confusion and excitement, I made my way through their ranks unnoticed, as the dust was rising in such great clouds that one could not see two yards in advance, and to this and the providence of the Almighty I owe my life. After passing through some five hundred yards and getting out of their ranks I was observed by them making for the camp, and then their firing at me commenced ; but I escaped, although the bullets went whistling past my head in great numbers.

I was soon at the General's camp, but on my arrival the troops were all in motion, and as my battalion was passing I joined the ranks and went with

them towards the enemy. The 7th Hussars having just arrived from England, were along with us. After three miles sharp trotting and galloping in the midst of dust, nearly blinding us all, we came upon the enemy, who, on perceiving us, arranged their guns and commenced their fire and continued it rather briskly. Our gallant commander, however, gave the order to charge, and before the rebel artillery had time to discharge a second round at us we were in amongst them cutting down the gunners at their guns in the act of putting the fuse to the touch-hole, and capturing the whole of the battery.

In this engagement I received a slight wound from some sharp combustible, but at the moment I took no notice of it. The Military Train had seven men killed and ten wounded, while the enemy's gunners and drivers were all killed. A few of the leading drivers, however, drew their swords and cut off the traces from the foremost team and made off.

While this was going on the infantry, with the artillery, got to work on the enemy, who had completely surrounded Jahalabad Fort, but they soon commenced to retreat beyond the fort, and at this point the 7th Hussars laid a great number of them low. This was a hard fought engagement, the enemy

standing their ground well, and even getting up on trees and firing on us.

After this engagement I returned to my post at the fort, and next morning the officer in command came to me and complimented me on the very exposed duty which I had performed in making for the camp on the previous day, at the same time remarking that in looking through his field glasses at where the engagement had taken place the previous day, he thought he could see some of our men lying on the ground, and as it was nearly dark when the engagement was finished I thought myself that it might be quite probable that some of our men might have been overlooked. I considered it my duty although the officer did not order me, to ascertain if any of my comrades were lying on the plain or among the trees about a mile to the right of the fort, perhaps wounded, with no help; so I mounted my horse and rode out of the gate where a gun of artillery was placed. I was not long in crossing the open plain, while all the time I was being watched by the men in the fort. On arriving at the summit of trees, I dismounted and looked all around me, but I could see nothing except dead Sepoys lying in all directions. On looking up into the trees I found some

hanging on the branches. They had gone there when the troops had got to close quarters as a hiding place, and had been shot and got entangled among the branches. On further looking about me for some time to see if I could find anything for preservation, I came across a very nice sword, and strapping it to my saddle I looked across the plain towards Lucknow, when I discerned eight or ten mounted men making towards the place where I stood. I was dismounted at the moment, but was very soon in my saddle, being pretty smart in these days. With great haste I made for the fort, but the enemy were making on me fast, and got between me and the fort. I began to think it was all up with me, but in the great excitement the enemy received from the men on the wall a volley which sent three or four of their horses to the ground, thus giving me a clear way to regain the fort, although I came very near being shot myself by our own men in thus trying to save me.

On 10th March we removed all the provisions and ammunition to the camp, and the engineers blew up Jahalabad Fort. Troops had been arriving every day after we had left the camp and there was a great number, all to take part in the taking of Lucknow.

On 17th March, everything was in readiness for the

when going into their houses looking for spoil. We were then prevented in consequence of this from going into the city without an officer in charge and arms.

We remained at Lucknow till 28th March, when the battalion formed part of a column to be commanded by General Lugard to march after Kooz Sing, who had an army of about ten thousand strong to raise the siege at Azimgurh, where the 13th Light Infantry were hemmed in. The column left Lucknow on 28th March, and marched for fourteen days through a very rough country with bush and jungle. We had a few skirmishes with the rebels in our course and made a halt about three miles from Azimgurh.

After one days rest a reconnoitering party was formed, consisting of two troops of the Military Train under command of Major Wyat, three guns of horse artillery. Two hundred of Hudson's Horse under command of Captain Hamilton, and all under the immediate command of Staff-officer Captain F. Middleton, who was aide de camp to General Lugard, had seen active service both in New Zealand and in India, in all about four hundred men.

We left the camp about 6 a.m., on 15th April, with this handful of men, and after skirting the left of

Azimgurh, we found that the enemy had retired during the previous night. We were pushed forward with all haste, and after passing about nine miles through a very dry and dusty track of country we came upon some baggage belonging to the rebels. We pursued our course and at last overtook the enemy at Koore Bridge. They had collected all their forces together with the view, apparently, of giving us a hot reception, and had hidden themselves from our view, in short, under bush at the other side of the bridge.

We were taken somewhat by surprise, not thinking that we had got so near them. Hudson's Horse were in front, followed by one troop of the Military Train and three guns, and the second troop in the rear. The Hudson's Horse crossed the bridge and received a volley from the enemy, putting them in disorder. They turned to their left and went down the embankment, thus leaving the first troop of the train, of which I was one, exposed to the enemy. At this moment Captain Middleton rode up to the front, saying, not to show the white feather as the Hudson's Horse had done, but to charge. I was in the *second of threes*, when down the embankment we went like a thunderbolt, just escaping a volley from the enemy, which passed over our heads as we descended. We

were, however, soon in amongst them, cutting and slashing them in great shape.

By this time the three guns and second troop had also crossed the bridge and were joined by Hudson's Horse in the engagement. The enemy soon commenced to retire, and when nearly all was over I received two bullet wounds, one through the arm and the other through the shoulder while in the act of delivering a blow with my sword. I was dragged from my horse, while at the same time he fell and my leg got under him. I lay on the ground for some time, being severely wounded. This lasted for about twenty-five minutes and was one of the severest engagements of the campaign.

The enemy must have lost six or seven hundred, while the Military Train had twenty killed and thirty wounded out of about eighty men. A number of Hudson's Horse were killed and their commanding officer was also killed. Two of the Military Train received Victoria Crosses for this engagement, but for what I was at a loss to know, as they were in rear of me all through the piece. They said they had endeavoured to save Captain Hamilton, but it did neither of them any good. I was among the last of the wounded unattended to, as the doctors said I could not live

long ; but, fortunately, he got disappointed. I was taken to the field hospital at Azimgurh, and remained unconscious for seven days, but by the goodness of God I was not then to leave this world.

After remaining for some time at the hospital all the wounded were taken to Benares in palinkens carried by the natives. It was a great sight to see so many on the road at once with a wounded man on each. After arriving at Benares we were placed on board a steamer dispatched for Calcutta, and when arriving there we were all taken to the general hospital. We remained here for a few weeks and then we all, to the number of five hundred, embarked on board a sailing vessel for England.

So much for India which is one of the most important countries in the world. After leaving Calcutta the weather became very hot, and we had rather a poor time of it as we lost quite a number by disease. The method of burial was in this way, the body would be placed in a blanket with a twenty-four pound cannon ball at the feet, and then the blanket sewn up. The service was read by the Captain of the vessel and the body committed to the deep.

We proceeded on our way and arrived at the Cape of Good Hope and the vessel remained at that port

for two days. I, with several others, went on shore, and we were all conveyed to the top of Table Mountain, from which we had a splendid view, as it overlooked the ocean.

After leaving the Cape, we experienced rather rough weather for a few days, after this we sailed along quite smoothly and then the long-looked for Old England, appeared in sight. After passing through the Channel we arrived at Gravesend, from which we were all conveyed to Fort Pitt hospital, Chatham. We remained here for some weeks, with the view of passing an examination by a board of doctors. Some of us were discharged and others were sent to their depots for light duty. My depot was Bristol, and on our arrival there we were received with great kindness by Colonel McMurdo, the commandant, and Captain Williams, commanding the depot.

I then received a three months furlough to Scotland. I left London by boat for Lieth, thence by rail to Haddington, where my father was living. On meeting him he did not know me. He had thought I had died from my wounds as I had not written to him for some time, and my name appeared in some paper as having been severely wounded. I had some

difficulty in convincing him that I was his son. Five long years had passed by since I had seen him, and now I was in different uniform and my complexion was quite changed. My hair had even commenced to turn gray through changed climates and hardships experienced in that time.

At the expiration of my furlough I returned to my depot at Bristol, and shortly after this the battalion arrived home and was stationed at Aldershot. I then again joined it, and on 1st January, 1859, was promoted as full sergeant. We remained here for a few days and the battalion was presented with medals at a general parade for India, with two clasps for relief and fall.

In 1860 we removed to Woolwich, and on or about the 10th December of that year the Third Battalion Military Train stationed at Aldershot received orders for British North America. Being short of sergeants and desirous not to send many of the married non-commissioned officers, volunteers were called for, and I offered myself and was accepted. I now left my battalion at Woolwich and joined the Third Battalion at Aldershot, which was under the command of Major McCourt.

On 15th December, 1860, we left Aldershot for

Liverpool, and arrived there next day, when my box was again uppermost in my mind. The same evening we embarked on board the steamship *Asia*, and had a most pleasant voyage till Christmas Day. This day was rather stormy, and on approaching the Banks of Newfoundland we passed a considerable number of large icebergs, which presented a splendid sight.

We arrived all safe and sound at Halifax on 2nd January, 1861, and remained there three days, being stationed at the railway depot and doing garrison duty. We then embarked on board a small steamer, and proceeded via. the Bay of Fundy to St. John, New Brunswick.

On our arrival at St. John we received a great welcome from the inhabitants, and were entertained at a grand banquet in the evening. Next morning everything was ready for our journey across the country to Rivière du Loup, being conveyed in fifty sleighs drawn by four horses each. Each sleigh contained twelve men rolled up in good and warm clothing. We proceeded on our journey, crossing the bay on the ice for nine miles or so.

This was our first start, and it was quite a change as contrasted with our former climate. On our journey we remained at night in the woods, where huts had

been temporarily erected for our accommodation. It took us full seven days to complete our journey from St. John to Rivière du Loup, being delayed by snow blocks. From the latter place we travelled by rail to Montreal, and after remaining there for some time the battalion was broken up in the following order : Headquarters, Montreal, and one troop each in London, Toronto and Kingston. My troop was for Toronto.

In April, 1861, we left Montreal and arrived in Toronto all well. We proceeded to the new garrison, where we received our horses and commenced duty.

Canada generally is rather a cold climate, although it is quite hot in midsummer. The troops were all in better health here than in any other country I had as yet visited. While in Toronto I was sent to Quebec on escort duty with some prisoners who had been sentenced to ten years penal servitude for military offences, and this gave me an opportunity of seeing and knowing the country. I and the prisoners left Toronto by boat, viewing the Thousand Islands ; passed down the rapids of the St. Lawrence, and under the great bridge at Montreal, and thence to Quebec, where I delivered my charge to an officer of one of Her Majesty's war ships. I then with my

escort proceeded to the citadel and remained there for two days. I visited the Plains of Abraham, where the great General Wolfe fell at the battle with the French which settled the supremacy of Great Britain in Canada. I now left Quebec by boat for Montreal, and thence to Toronto by rail; and here I got married. I also visited the celebrated Falls of Niagara, the sight of which impressed me more than all I had yet seen, as well as Canada West, Hamilton and Lake Simcoe.

The war between the United States, North and South, was taking place at this time, and while visiting Niagara I got in company with an officer of the northern army who pressed me very strongly to join their ranks. I informed him that I was quite satisfied with my own army and thanked him all the same. I had not forgotten my misfortune in Liverpool and did not desire strangers information.

But all this pleasant time in Canada came to an end, for one fine morning when the mail was opened which had arrived from England, news came for the battalion to return home. Our horses were all then sold by auction, and on 4th September, 1864, we embarked at the Queen's wharf for Montreal. We arrived there and after joining the battalion we all left

for Quebec. We then embarked on board a transport and started on our homeward voyage.

After passing Belle Isle the weather became rather stormy, and some of the Canadian ladies were rather uneasy as this was their first venture on the ocean. We arrived all safe at Liverpool and then travelled by rail to Woolwich. We remained here for a month or so and I again received a furlough to visit my father in Scotland. I took steamer from London to Leith along with my wife, and on the expiration of my furlough we returned to Woolwich by steamer.

I was ordered to London in charge of a detachment. While in London I paid a visit to all the places of interest: The Tower, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, Houses of Parliament, British Museum, Crystal Palace, Buckingham Palace, etc., I was then selected by my captain to go along with him on the expedition to Abyssinia, with 30 officers and 40 sergeants. I did not volunteer on this occasion owing to leaving Mrs. Fisher behind in a strange land as I had been, but I did my first duty and obeyed my superiors. About the end of April, 1867, we all assembled at Woolwich, under the command of Col. Clark Kennedy, the commandant of the Military Train, a brave and gallant officer, who had seen a great deal

of foreign service—in the China war of 1841, in India, siege of Moltan, and in the Crimea.

On 4th May we left Woolwich by rail for Southampton and on the following day embarked on board one of the Oriental steamers. In four days we passed Gibraltar, then Malta, and arrived at Alexandria in thirteen days from leaving England. This was the most pleasant voyage which I had as yet experienced in my travels—good rations, good beds, and treated as first class passengers.

On arriving at Alexandria, we marched to Gabbary Palace. We remained some time in Egypt doing duty in receiving the horses and mules from the steamers. We had also hard work as it was very hot, and the sun on the sands being severe on our eyes. After collecting about five hundred animals, I along with a few men were sent on with them by rail to Suez, where we transferred them to steamers down the Red Sea to Aden. Altogether about eight thousand animals passed through our hands, and the drivers of them were Swedes, Prussians, Poles, Arabs, Turks, Italians and Greeks. We had a good deal to contend with, for we had to be entirely responsible for everything. We had interpreters to explain our orders to the different drivers ; but withal it was a hard task. The war,

however, soon came to an end, as the king committed suicide, and his whole army routed.

Abyssinia is a wild country, being infested with various kinds of wild animals. The water is also very scarce. We returned to Suez and then travelled by rail to Cairo. We also paid a short visit to the pyramids, the sight of which baffles description. One would think that they reached the clouds. We pursued our way to the summit on which there was a platform thirty or forty feet square, made up of large stones, some I should say weighing one and a half tons each ; and there were many names cut out on these stones.

We left Cairo and arrived safe again at Alexandria, and remained here for a week and visited all the places of interest. Eggyt produces wheat and various kinds of fruit, as well as tobacco, and is very hot.

At last we embarked again for home, sweet home ; and, having a good time down the Mediterranean, we arrived at Malta. I with some others, having a short time to spend, viewed the Cathedral of St. John. The keys of the gates leading into Jerusalem hung close to the altar, and altogether the sight was a splendid one in this temple.

We left Malta and made good time, passing

Gibraltar we were soon on the Bay of Biscay. It being 25th December, 1867, we had our Christmas dinner once more on board ship.

Arriving at Southampton, I proceeded with others from Woolwich to Ireland, and was stationed at Dublin for some time. I afterwards went to the Curragh Camp, where the Military Train was broken up and a new corps formed, called the Army Service Corps. I joined this corps in 1869, and was appointed as Canteen Serjeant for some time.

I left Ireland and proceeded to Aldershot, and from the latter place I was sent on to Dartmouth, after which I was stationed at Davenport. It was at this station that I received the medal for good conduct and long service. I again returned to Aldershot, from whence I was sent to Kensington, London. While here, His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief visited us during stable hours, and I had conversations with him about our duties.

At Kensington I received my discharge from the service, after twenty-one years and three months, with a pension of two shillings per day for life. After receiving my discharge I remained in England for about one year, when I thought I should like to again see Canada.

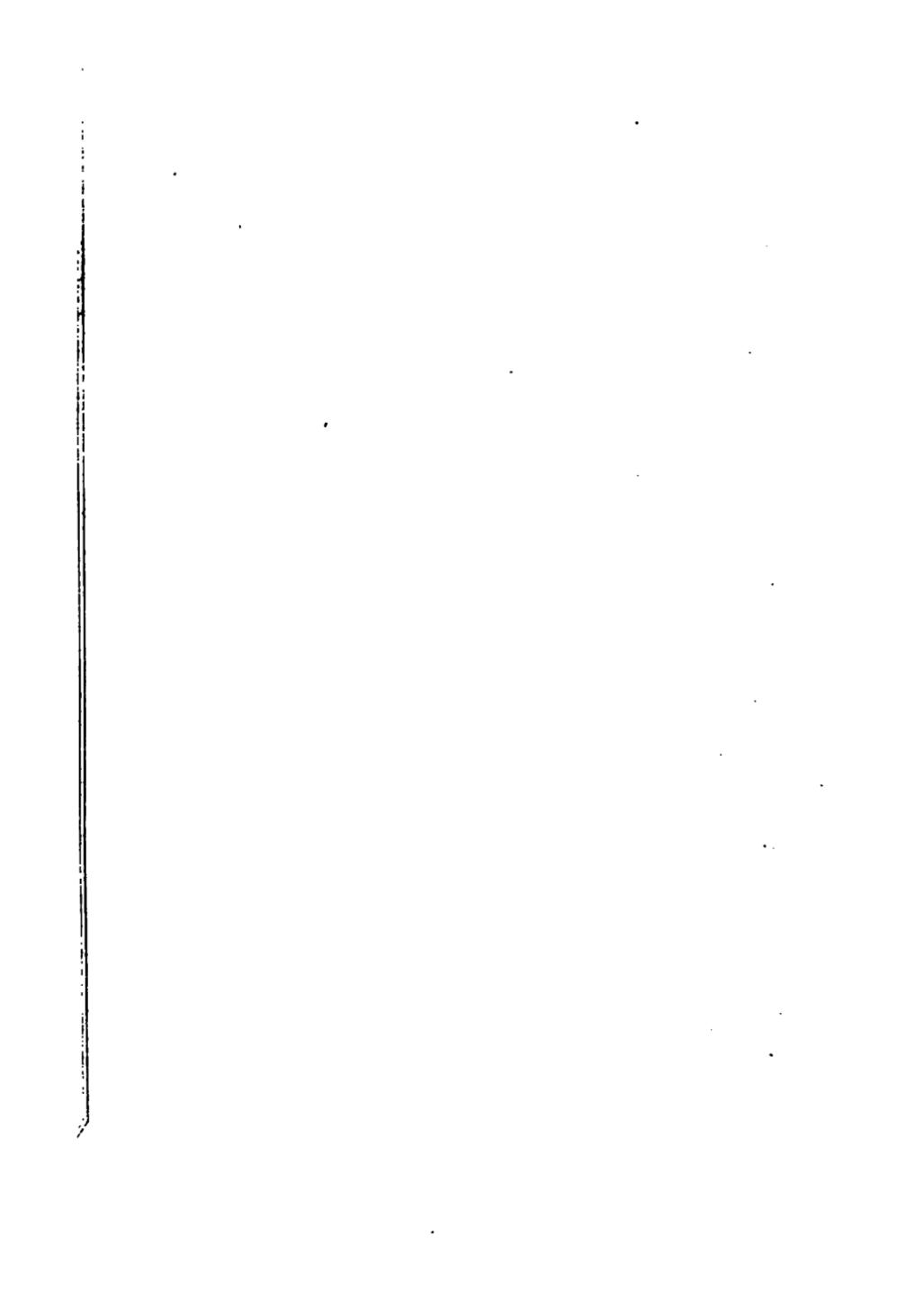
I left London once again for Liverpool not forgetting my box. My wife and I embarked and arrived in Toronto on 31st March, 1877. We remained in Toronto for a few months and then went to Brantford. I received employment here as messenger in the Canadian Bank of Commerce, and here I had the great pleasure of once again meeting the officer who had the charge of the Military Train at Koorbridge, on 15th April, 1858, when I got so severely wounded. He was now General Middleton commanding the volunteers in the Dominion of Canada, and I had the honor of cordially shaking hands with the gallant officer at the unveiling of the Brant Memorial, Brantford

I remained at the bank for twelve years, but got injured and had to give up my position. I then returned to Toronto where I am now living, after having gone through the above travels.

H. R. H. The Duke of Connaught, when reviewing the Army and Navy Veterans during his visit at Toronto in June last, congratulated me on the several campaigns in which I had taken part, shaking hands and wishing me long life and prosperity.

H. R. Highness is now a live member of the Army and Navy Veterans.

TESTIMONIALS.



TESTIMONIALS, &c.

*Received by the Author, who is now residing
at 39 St. Clarence Avenue, Toronto.*



I, AUGUSTUS FREDERICK DUKE OF LEINSTER, Lieutenant of the County of Kildare, having received the direction of His Excellency the Lieutenant-General and General Governor of Ireland, to nominate and appoint, and to cause to be sworn Special Constables for the Baronies of East Offaly, Connell and Kilcullen, in the County of Kildare, do hereby, in pursuance of the powers vested in me as such Lieutenant of the County, nominate and appoint Sergeant James Fisher, Military Train, to be a Special Constable for said Baronies of East Offaly, Connell and Kilcullen, in the County of Kildare, and direct that the said James Fisher shall forthwith be sworn as such Special Constable, for such Baronies, before the Honbl. Wm. Forbes or others of the Justices of the Peace for said County of Kildare.

Given under my hand at Carton, in County of Kildare, this
10th day of May, 1869.

LEINSTER.

I have known Sergt. James Fisher for the last sixteen years, seven of which he has served in the Company under my command. He has proved himself a valuable trustworthy non-commissioned officer, and I have great pleasure in recommending him for any situation where zeal and integrity are required.

P. GERARD LOCHYER,
Of. Comdg. 10th Co.,
Army Service Corps.

SHORNCLIFFE, 25th April, 1876.

ARMY SERVICE CORPS,

KENSINGTON, March 15th, 1877.

This is to certify that Sergeant James Fisher was Acting Sergt. Major of the Det. Army S. Corps, under my command at Kensington, for upwards of nine months, during which time he has performed his duty in a satisfactory manner. He was sober and painstaking, and I parted with him with regret on his taking his discharge after 21 years' service.

W. J. B. BAMPFIELD,

Commg. Det. A. S. Corps.

THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE,

HAMILTON, 30th Oct. 1890.

Dear Fisher:

I have yours of the 28th inst. advising me of your intention of applying for the position of Court Constable in Toronto, and trust that you will receive the appointment, believing you to be in every way fitted for it.

If you require references, I will be most happy to have you make use of my name if it will be of any service to you, as during the ten years you served under me in Brantford, I always considered I had the *best* messenger in the Bank ; your character all that could be desired, and most competent in the performance of your duties, besides being ever watchful in the interest of the Bank.

Your military experience should make you a most desirable man for the position you are now applying for.

Again wishing you may be successful.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

WM. ROBERTS.

Mr. JAMES FISHER,

39 St. Clarence Avenue,
Toronto.

THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE,
BRANTFORD, 20th Dec., 1889.

My Dear Fisher:

We have been so busy with the inspection that I had to put off writing to you, and I now have much pleasure in enclosing a draft for \$50.

Wishing you every success and a merry Xmas,

Believe me,
Sincerely yours,

JEFFERY HALE,
Acting Manager.

THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE,
Queen St. West, Toronto, Nov. 19, 1890.

JNO. LAXTON, Esq.,
Parkdale.

Dear Sir :—The bearer, Mr. JAS. FISHER, was in the service of the Bank of Commerce for twelve years and only resigned on account of moving from Brantford to Toronto. He is also an old soldier, having served twenty-one years in the British army. I know him intimately and a finer or more honest man never lives. Do what you can for him, and oblige,

Yours truly,
G. A. HOLLAND, *Manager.*

